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By: NA NARA Date: 4/13/97

ORIGIN/ACTION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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FILE DESIGNATION

CA-6414

NO.

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Amembassy LONDON, PARIS, Bonn, ROME, ANKARA

INFO: Amembassy TUNIS, RABAT, ALGIERS, TRIPOLI, USNATO

Brussels

FROM : Department of State

DATE: **DEC 2 5 22 PM '69**

SUBJECT : Instructions for Consultations on Tunisia

REF :

1. This message contains background material for your use as appropriate in conducting a bilateral exchange on Tunisia with the Foreign Ministry or any other officials designated by the Foreign Ministry. The package contains an internal and external political assessment and a brief review of American military and economic assistance programs to Tunisia. All the material contained in the attachments except Section I (Internal Political Assessment) may be transmitted at your discretion verbally or in writing. Section I is an INR document and ~~is for internal use only~~ is for ~~internal use only~~ the background of briefing officers only.

2. As each post is aware, the Tunisian Government, following the September 1 Libyan coup, approached the British, French, Italians and ourselves with a request for help and reassurance. The Tunisian Foreign Minister extended his appeal to representatives of other NATO countries at the UNGA. On September 17 Secretary General Broome convened informally at Italy's request the NATO Permanent Representatives of France, Italy, the United Kingdom and United States to consider Tunisia's demarche. They came to an understanding that Tunisia's concerns should not be a subject of NATO consideration and could be more usefully discussed between Tunisia's friends. Accordingly, Italy suggested a multilateral ambassadorial meeting in Rome and invited the United States, Germany, France, Turkey and the United Kingdom. We demurred, feeling such a meeting could become public knowledge and thereby be misinterpreted. Equally while we did not rule out an eventual multilateral discussion, we felt preparatory bilateral exchanges were required to establish the ground rules and provide some indication on how forthcoming each participant intended to be. France, Germany and eventually Turkey agreed to the bilateral exchange. We believe Italy and the UK will have no serious objection.

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FOR DEPT. USE ONLY

In Out

Drafted by:

AF/N FGWisner:chg *FW*

Drafting Date: 11/21/69

Contents and Classification Approved by: AF/N - Mr. Newsom *FW*

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EUR/AIS - Mr. Crump *FW*

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EUR/BMI - Mr. Cheslaw *FW*

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3. Through consultations and an exchange of views and information the Department hopes to accomplish the following objectives:

- (a) We attach great importance both within and without NATO to full consultations between allies on questions relating to the Western Mediterranean. By focusing attention on one country, we hope to set an example and develop a framework for consultations on other countries and regional blocs within the area.
- (b) A complete exchange of information on Tunisia to include political estimates and assistance programs is inherently valuable and could perhaps ^{permit} development of parallel policy and plans.
- (c) Ultimately we hope to open better communications and improve cooperation between our various embassies and assistance missions in Tunisia and elsewhere in North Africa.
- (d) We wish to obtain for Tunisia concrete results in the form of political reassurance and assistance.

4. These objectives and specific political and program objectives contained in the body of the document will not be rapidly or easily obtained. We foresee, even in the limited case of Tunisia, an extended period of consultations on a bilateral basis and do not exclude consultations on a multilateral basis perhaps similar to the original proposal of the Italian Government. We would like, as soon as possible, each Embassy's assessment of the interest the respective governments show in continuing consultation and, based on these reactions, we will plan our next steps. In due course the Department would like any comment or reply the Foreign Ministries may make on the information contained in the enclosed document. Specifically, we hope to obtain each country's estimate of the Tunisian internal and external situation as well as details of military and economic assistance programs. In addition to discussing this package in Europe the Department will also go over its contents with the European embassies here.

5. We intend to inform the Tunisian Government that bilateral talks have begun. We will not discuss the contents of this message or European reactions to it with the Tunisian Government. We hope the respective Foreign Ministries will exercise the same discretion,

6. The military and economic assistance papers are brief summaries of large and complex programs. While general exchanges will be the task of our embassies in the interested capitals with the respective Foreign Ministries, you may advise each Foreign Ministry economic and military data supplied here is brief and more specific information, in depth discussion of potential areas of assistance, or

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detailed exchanges of technical data, would better be carried on in Tunis between our respective missions. If necessary, we would be prepared also to consider sending technical experts to any capital where such an approach could further the exchange.

7. At your convenience we would also like to have your assessment of possible interest of host government in expanded consultations on North Africa.

8. FOR: Embassy PARIS: In view of the special French relationship with Tunisia, you may assure the Quai we look forward to remaining in close contact as the consultations progress. We continue to welcome exchanges similar to those which preceded the Mzali visit to Paris.

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